

Emergency Responder

WASHINGTON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

November-December 2002

Storms, drought hit state farmers

Drought and weather woes continued to mount this fall for Washington's ranchers and farm producers.

U. S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman on Nov. 21 designated Adams and Franklin counties as agricultural disaster areas because of drought.

Veneman's Nov. 21 decision made low-interest Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans available to all qualified farmers and ranchers in Adams County as well as in the contiguous counties of Franklin, Grant, Lincoln and Whitman.

In addition, her Nov. 27 news release stated that producers of cattle, sheep, goats and buffalo in Adams and Franklin counties would be eligible for the Livestock Compensation Program because of drought. Signup ended Dec. 13.

Veneman also approved agricultural disaster designations on Nov. 27 for Benton and Franklin counties because of freeze and wind damage to soft fruit crops in Franklin during last April and May; drought damage to crops in Franklin since Sept. 2001; wind, rain and hail



Department of Corrections personnel conduct a Joint Operations Academy exercise in December at the Washington Corrections Center for Women in Gig Harbor. (DOC Photo)

DOC conducts exercise at Gig Harbor

by Jocelyn Hofe and Mary Christensen,
Washington State Department of Corrections

The Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) in early December completed its seventh Joint Operations Academy. The objective of the academy is to provide incident commanders, on-line responders and specialty team members experience in all aspects of a "worst case" scenario inside a correctional facility.

The brainchild of Performance Institute Director Cheryl Young, Performance Administrator Dan Pacholke, and Emergency Response Manager Jocelyn Hofe, the joint operations academy began as a way to train Emergency Response (ERT) and Special Emergency Response (SERT), Crisis Negotiation Teams (CNT), and Command Center personnel for practical application of tactical responses to emergencies in DOC facilities.

Joint Operations began with ERT and SERT team members from various facilities coming together to drill at one location. With each Joint Operations Academy more and more participation from other staff who would be placed in critical roles during an emergency was requested until each Academy has become a training venue for all staff who are assigned emergency response duties at their facilities.

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Inappropriate 9-1-1 wireless calls increase

With a notable increase in wireless phone usage, 9-1-1 call centers across the state report they are receiving an increase in volume of inappropriate 9-1-1 wireless calls.

Thirty-one counties in Washington voluntarily participated in a survey conducted at the state's 87 public safety answering points (PSAPs) over a two-week period this past October.

The state-sponsored survey tracked types of calls -- was the call made on a wireline or wireless phone? Where did the call originate from -- a home, business or pay phone? Was the call made from a residence, apartment building, business, school or open area? Was the call made in a city, suburb or rural setting? The 9-1-1 telecommunicator then subjectively recorded the approximate age and sex of the caller.

Survey results revealed that 11.3 percent of all 9-1-1 calls reported during this time period were inappropriate. The call should never have been placed. The call was *not life threatening* in nature and did not warrant *emergency* police, fire or medical assistance.

Some of these inappropriate calls asked for general information, such as the time, or a phone number of a government agency. Some were misdials, the result of accidentally depressing a preprogrammed button on some phone sets designed specifically to dial 9-1-1.

The majority of inappropriate 9-1-1 calls placed were misdials made using a wireline phone from a single residence in a city setting by an adult female.

Survey statistics also pointed out that there were one and one-half times more misdialled 9-1-1 wireless calls than 9-1-1 wireline calls placed for police, fire or medical aid or for general information. This translates into a finding that wireless phone sets may need to be deprogrammed from dialing 9-1-1.

The volume of inappropriate 9-1-1 calls from 2001 with 33 counties participating showed 8.95 percent of the total 9-1-1 calls were inappropriately placed as compared to 2002 figures which show 11.3 percent of all 9-1-1 calls were inappropriate.

If your county wants to participate in this annual survey, or wants survey results, contact Penelope Cassidy at P.Cassidy@emd.wa.gov or 253-512-7016.

Whitman County EM changes

Whitman County voters have elected Brett J. Myers as their new sheriff, replacing Steve Tomson, who also served as the county's emergency management director. Rita Konzal, who was the county's emergency management coordinator, became a regional coordinator in November for the State Department of Health.

Preparations start for TOPOFF 2 Exercise

Preparations continued through the fall for next May's TOPOFF 2 -- a major national counter-terrorism exercise involving the city of Seattle, King and Pierce counties and the state of Washington.

The congressionally-mandated exercise tests the country's ability to respond and manage acts of terrorism. Chicago and Seattle will be the sites for the 2003 exercise, sponsored and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. The exercise also includes national U.S. and Canadian first responders and officials.

In Washington, federal agencies will team up with responders from Seattle, King and Pierce counties, the state, area hospitals and other cities and agencies to participate in the exercise. Area events will feature a weapons of mass destruction incident and an attack against computer networks.

The U.S. State and Justice departments have spearheaded national seminars on public information, bio-terrorism, radiological dirty bomb events and recovery issues.

Washington state, King and Pierce counties, and Seattle will divide \$2.5 million in federal funds to offset costs associated with exercise participation.

TOPOFF 2 is the second national anti-terrorism exercise. The first was held in 2000 and involved the cities of Denver; Portsmouth, N.H.; and Washington, D.C.

New federal policy outlined for PA aid

A new policy announced Dec. 12 by President Bush could significantly impact public assistance disaster funding for private non-profit agencies, says Diane Offord, manager of WEMD's Response and Recovery Unit.

The policy change, designed to help faith-based and community groups work more easily with the federal government, will allow faith-based institutions to compete for public assistance aid in federally declared disasters.

The Bush administration said the ruling specifically would help the Seattle Hebrew Academy that suffered an estimated \$8.6 million damage in the 2001 Nisqually Earthquake.

FEMA had denied the academy's request for public assistance funds because the school restricted its enrollment to students of the Jewish faith. The academy had appealed the decision.

"Disasters don't discriminate, and neither should our response to them," said Joe Allbaugh, FEMA director."

The new policy is retroactive to Jan. 20, 2001, and could affect public assistance fund requests involving several Seattle area churches and other faith-based agencies, said Offord, state coordinating officer for the Nisqually disaster.



Glen Woodbury, (left) EMD director; John Pennington, (center) Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) Region 10 director; and Maj. Gen. Timothy J. Lowenberg, (right) Washington Military Department director, announce FEMA homeland security grants for Washington state at Camp Murray press conference, Dec. 13. (FEMA photo)

FEMA awards Homeland Security funding

Contracts for planning and other work from the federal Homeland Security 2002 supplemental funding could be in place by mid-January, according to Jim Schoonover, manager of EMD's Policy, Programs and Training unit.

"We're going to push hard to make this happen," said Schoonover following the Dec. 13 announcement of Washington's \$2.54 million grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for state and local emergency planning to respond to terrorism and other emergencies and disasters.

John Pennington, FEMA region 10 director, said the grant should be seen as a down payment of federal support to bolster state and local emergency response planning and preparations.

The major portion of the funds -- \$2.07 million -- will fund all-hazard emergency planning, including plans for weapons of mass destruction terrorism, at all government levels. Local and tribal jurisdictions will receive 75 percent or \$1.55 million of the planning grants. They will be distributed by intrastate regions established for state Department of Health (DOH) bioterrorism planning.

The regions and grant amounts are as follows:

- Region 1 (Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, San Juan and Island counties), \$218,355.
- Region 2 (Clallam, Jefferson and Kitsap counties), \$123,078.

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FEMA awards Homeland Security funds

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- Region 3 (Mason, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Lewis and Thurston counties), \$136,660.
- Region 4 (Clark, Skamania, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties), \$142,377.
- Region 5 (Pierce County), \$179,494.
- Region 6 (King County), \$333,996.
- Region 7 (Okanogan, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas and Grant counties), \$111,805.
- Region 8 (Yakima, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla and Klickitat counties), \$147,873.
- Region 9 (Asotin, Garfield, Columbia, Adams, Whitman, Spokane, Lincoln, Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille counties) \$160,191.

A total of \$418,543 of the state's homeland security money will support the establishment of local Citizen Corps/Citizen Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and fund the training of community volunteers who are interested in emergency response efforts.

Seventy-five percent of the total CERT grant, or \$313,907, must go to local and tribal governments. The state will distribute a majority of the citizen corps grant money by DOH intrastate regions.

A total of \$31,390 or 10 percent of the citizen corps grant for local jurisdictions will be set aside for tribal entities. The local jurisdiction grant also will finance statewide requests for proposals to allow local governments to compete for approximately \$70,000 to promote cross region and statewide innovative practices.

Twenty-five percent or \$101,636 of Washington's citizen corps grant would be retained at the state level to provide staffing, training and grant administration.

A third portion of the terrorism grant gives Washington \$50,000 for assessments of state, local and tribal emergency operations centers. The state EOC assessment is to be completed in six months.

Thurman receives awards

Barbara Thurman, who directs EMD's public education outreach programs, received three International Association of Emergency Manager media awards for the campaign plan, posters and materials for the state's 2002 Disaster Preparedness Month program.

DOC conducts exercise

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Joint Operations Academy students now consist of staff from all facilities statewide to participate in their roles as Specialty Team members: disturbance control, special emergency response teams, marksman/spotters, crisis negotiation teams, public information officers, intelligence officers, medical, fire, critical incident stress management teams, first responders, and administrators who are potential incident commanders fill the class roster.

Day One consists of classroom activities where instructors share lessons learned from real events and past academy experiences. Questions are answered based on Departmental policy, proven emergency response principals, case studies, and best practices derived from post event critiques.

The Joint Operations Academy is held at major correctional facilities to familiarize responders with realistic problems associated with secure perimeters, potentially volatile populations, and unique security considerations. Events range from natural disasters and terrorism to offender disturbances and primarily hostage situations. The course builds from policy review and teambuilding exercises, through a tabletop exercise, a four hour full scale exercise with simulations to a final seven-hour full scale exercise.

Complexity of each exercise, levels of evaluation and stress are increased incrementally over the first three days. To create realism and include all aspects of an prison emergency event, reports are written, then the case is reviewed by attorneys from the Corrections branch of the State's Attorney General's Office. The fourth day of class is spent in mock depositions where students are deposed and critiqued. A final Critical Incident Review process is slated to be added to the next Academy.

Drought, storms hit state farmers

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damage to Benton and Franklin crops last July; and drought, freeze and wind damage between last January and May in Benton.

The secretary's Nov. 27 action also made low-interest FSA loans available to farmers in contiguous counties of Adams, Columbia, Grant, Walla Walla, Benton and Whitman.

Gov. Gary Locke requested farm disaster designations in December for much of the state because of drought and freeze damage to crops.

If approved by Veneman, the request would provide emergency low-interest FSA loans to cover production and farm property losses to farmers in the primary counties and adjoining counties.

Training classes set

Contact Rosanne Garrand at (253) 512-7048 for information about the following classes:

- Jan. 14, Effective Communications, Spokane.
- Feb. 2, ATC 20/21, Clark County.
- Feb. 25, Basic PIO, King County.
- March 11, Exercise Design, Thurston County.
- March 21, ATC 20/21, Thurston County.
- March 25, Emergency Planning, Tri-Cities.

Hazard Mitigation projects endorsed

Ten projects totaling \$10.6 million have been recommended to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the second round of Hazard Mitigation Grants financed by Nisqually Earthquake assistance. Washington Emergency Management Division recommendations were submitted in November to FEMA:

- City of Port Townsend, \$2 million. The project would add emergency medical services, an emergency operations center and an emergency communications systems to the city fire station.
- City of Seattle, \$1 million. The project would seismically strengthen 150 low-to-moderate income homes.
- Highline Water District, \$269,424. Three district reservoirs would be retrofitted with flexible piping and connections to mitigate against future earthquake damage.
- Skyway Water and Sewer District, \$608,136. Three water reservoirs would be seismically retrofitted with additional anchors and structural reinforcement.
- City of Centralia, \$253,380. This project would elevate seven homes that lie in flood-prone areas.
- South Bend School District, \$499,024. This project seismically retrofits an elementary school by removing bricks, glass blocks and nonstructural walls and by strengthening the cafeteria/multi-purpose room walls.
- Snohomish County, \$1.8 million. Ten homes would be acquired and removed from the floodway of the North Fork Stillaguamish River.
- Providence Health System-St. Peter Hospital, \$2.2 million. This seismic mitigation project would stabilize the hospital's northwest tower that houses several hospital care units and administrative offices.
- Tumwater School District, \$875,535. This project seismically retrofits the multipurpose room of the Tumwater School District's Littlerock Elementary School.
- Whatcom County, \$999,100. This project acquires and removes four homes and seven other structures from the alluvial fan area adjacent to Canyon Creek.

WWEN Conference set for April 22-23

Presentations on World Trade Center recovery and logistics operations will be featured at the 2003 Partners in Emergency Preparedness Conference, April 22-23, at Bellevue's Double Tree Hotel. Registration opens Feb. 17. Fees are \$195 before March 17; \$245, March 17-April 14; and \$345 after April 14. More information is on the conference website at <capps.wsu.edu/emergencyprep> or from Washington State University, Conferences and Professional Programs, wsuconf@wsu.edu or (509) 335-3530.

EMD announces personnel transfers and promotions

Bill Whobrey was honored Nov. 8 by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program for his hours of volunteer service to EMD as the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency System coordinator.

Ken Wolf returned to EMD in mid-November as a Terrorism Program coordinator in the Policy, Programs and Training Unit. He had been on a one-year leave of absence to work as a policy analyst in the Office of Homeland Security in the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C.

Jerald Compton was promoted Dec. 2 to the post of secretary administrative in the Mitigation, Analysis and Plans Unit. He has been a secretary senior in the Director's Office since July 2001.

Lynn Cypher received an EMD Certificate of Appreciation Nov. 15 for outstanding customer service and for her professionalism, efficiency and caring attitude as the division's receptionist

and switchboard operator.

Lorri Hergert, program assistant in the Enhanced 911 Unit, was recognized Nov. 21 for her 10 years of state service.

Michelle Sabin, program assistant in the terrorism program in the Policy, Programs and Training Unit, was promoted to Terrorism Program Coordinator effective Dec. 6. She has worked in EMD since August 2001.

Randy Coggan, who has served as Emergency Operations Officer in the Response and Recovery Unit since April 1, left EMD Dec. 12 to become Microsoft Corp.'s Senior Program Manager in Global Operations in charge of business continuity/disaster recovery.

George Crawford, who has served as Earthquake Program Coordinator since December 1997, became the Emergency Management Program Grants/State-Local Assistance Program Manager in the Policy, Programs and

Training Unit Dec. 20.

Amy Ray recently accepted a promotional opportunity as a PIO-in-training with the Department of Information Services. She was an Office Assistant Senior in the Public Assistance Program.

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The Adjutant General

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